

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 16, 2006

Dr. Henry Johnson  
Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20202-0001

Dear Dr. Johnson:

As members of Oregon's Congressional Delegation, we are writing in support of our state's application to participate in the Department of Education's Growth Model Pilot Project.

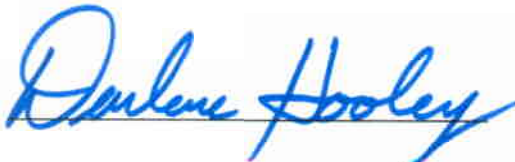
We believe the Model Pilot Project will provide educators with a better method to assess student learning and achievements. It will also lead to better data collection regarding student and school progress, both of which are integral to complying with the No Child Left Behind Act. If selected, Oregon will be a valuable contributor to the project and to the greater success of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Oregon has already launched several initiatives that make it well-qualified for the Growth Model Pilot Project. The state has implemented a web-based assessment program as well as a secure student identification system that monitors individual student progress over time. These programs, in addition to recent enhancements to the state's school and district accountability system, will enable Oregon to meet the Growth Model Pilot Project's rigorous data requirements.

Oregon's qualifications and demonstrated commitment to the No Child Left Behind Act make it an ideal candidate for the Growth Model Pilot Project.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,





**Theodore R. Kulongoski**  
**Governor**

February 14, 2006

Dr. Henry Johnson  
Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education  
US Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20202-0001

Dear Dr. Johnson:

I write to express my strong support for Oregon's application for the Growth Model Pilot Project. For some time, Oregon has been leading efforts to establish high standards and appropriate assessment systems to help all students achieve their full potential.

Our application represents a collaborative effort that involved stakeholders from across the state who understand how appropriate and measurable standards benefit children. This project will allow us to provide even stronger feedback to educators as they work to meet the needs of students. It also will provide better information to parents and the community.

Oregon is committed to enhancing its student data system and making its testing program available on-line for all schools. We have not shied away from accountability, and we want to make sure our system is fair and valid.

With all of the hard work carried out by the Department of Education and our systems educators, Oregon is ready and able to take this next critical step.

I urge you to approve the proposal so we can begin this work for the benefit of children in Oregon.

Sincerely,

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI  
Governor

TRK:js/cy



SUSAN CASTILLO  
State Superintendent  
of Public Instruction

CAM PREUS-BRALY  
Commissioner of  
Community Colleges  
& Workforce  
Development Dept.

*Members*

NIKKI SQUIRE  
Chair

JERRY BERGER  
Vice-Chair

STEVE BOGART

BRENDA FRANK

VANESSA GASTON

EMILIO  
HERNANDEZ, JR.

DUNCAN WYSE

*Advisors*

DOUG DOUGHERTY

FRANK TODA

ROGER WILL

*Staff*

JAN MCCOMB  
Executive Officer

PAULA MERRITT  
Executive Support

## OREGON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

255 Capitol St. NE; Salem, Oregon 97310-1300  
503-378-3600x4421; [www.ode.state.or.us](http://www.ode.state.or.us)

February 16, 2006

Dr. Henry Johnson  
Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20202-0001

Dear Secretary Johnson:

This letter is to inform you of the State Board of Education's unqualified support of Oregon's request to use a growth model for purposes of determining Adequate Yearly Progress for the federal *No Child Left Behind* act.

While supporting the intent of the federal law, the board has become aware that some districts, through no fault of their own, are labeled as failing as measured by current yardsticks.

For example, in one Oregon school district 70 percent of the students do not speak English as a first language and are highly mobile. No matter how good the education program, no matter how dedicated the teachers, under the current AYP definitions Woodburn will inevitably fail to make adequate progress. Other districts face similarly high hurdles.

Teachers and schools who are successful educating all children should be recognized and emulated. Teachers and schools who fail our students deserve guidance, and if necessary, sanctions. A growth model more accurately distinguishes between real success and real failure.

A system that is perceived as inherently unfair breeds resistance and cynicism that could ultimately topple the good NCLB accomplishments.

Oregon's State Board of Education is committed to educating every student that enter our school house doors, and to leave no child behind on the path of an educated citizenry ready for college and the work place.

Sincerely,

Nikki Squire, Chair  
State Board of Education



February 13, 2006

Dr. Henry Johnson  
Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-0001

**OFFICERS**

President  
David Beeson  
Silver Falls  
President-Elect  
Jeff Sanders  
Jefferson County  
Vice President  
Craig Prewitt  
Phoenix-Talent  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Annette Mattson  
David Douglas  
Past President  
Peggy Penland  
Medford

**DIRECTORS**

Harry Ainsworth  
Multnomah ESD  
Maria Caballero  
Gervais  
Francis Charbonnier  
McMinnville  
Beth Gerot  
Eugene  
Wally Hazen  
Coos Bay  
Kris Howatt  
Gresham-Barlow  
Dave Krumbein  
Pendleton  
Krina Lemons  
Salem-Keizer  
Dean Livelybrooks  
Crow-Applegate-Lorane  
Fred Marble  
Forest Grove  
Scott Pillar  
High Desert ESD  
Idalia Stam  
Nyssa

**EX-OFFICIO DIRECTORS**

COSA  
Jim Jamieson  
NSBA Director  
Carolyn Ortman  
OAESD  
Paul Zastrow  
OASE  
Tim Labrousse  
OCCA  
Chuck Clemans  
State Board of Education  
Nikki Squire

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Kevin McCann

Dear Dr. Johnson:

On behalf of the Oregon School Boards Association, our board of directors and the 1,400 elected public education board members in Oregon, I am writing to express our support for State Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo and Oregon's Growth Model Application to the U.S. Department of Education. OSBA wholeheartedly supports this proposal and its commitment to creating a fairer and more accurate accountability system under the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

OSBA has always supported the spirit behind NCLB – to meet the unique learning needs of each child. We view Oregon's application as part of the continuous improvement of NCLB that will ensure a fair and valid measurement of student learning and school progress over time. OSBA firmly believes in accountability. A fair and accurate student assessment system is a way to further inform instruction thus creating better educated students. This application will serve both those ends.

Oregon is a national leader in school accountability and education policy. To that end, Oregon pushed forward with the Educational Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and even now leads the nation with a viable longitudinal data system that tracks the educational performance of each child in the state. It is upon this firm foundation that Oregon builds this application for a Growth Model system for tracking AYP.

Individual student growth data is the ideal way to measure learning while maintaining Oregon's commitment to high standards. OSBA believes this application fulfills and expands that commitment. The Oregon School Boards Association fully supports Oregon's application and respectfully requests that it be approved for implementation.

Sincerely,

Kevin McCann  
Executive Director

David Beeson  
OSBA President/Silver Falls School Board

DGW

cc: Rob Larson  
Federal Liaison; Oregon Department of Education  
255 Capitol St. NE; Salem, OR 97310-0203



February 13, 2006

Dr. Henry Johnson  
Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20202-0001

Dear Dr. Johnson:

The Oregon Education Association (OEA) has a strong commitment to being a leader in Oregon on professional and educational issues. OEA partners with other education entities and the community to support quality education for all students. OEA represents 43,000 members in the education profession. Please accept this letter in support of the Oregon Department of Education's Growth Model Application.

OEA believes the ODE's Growth Model Proposal will create a more valid way to measure student learning and the progress of schools. OEA supports providing individual student growth data in order to assist teachers with maximizing each student's learning. This model provides a fair system to measure adequate yearly progress as required.

OEA looks forward to continuing our work with other partners to implement the growth model.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Vanderstek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Courtney" and last name "Vanderstek" clearly legible.

Courtney Vanderstek  
Interim Executive Director  
Oregon Education Association

*Working together for public education*



**CONFEDERATION OF OREGON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

707 13<sup>TH</sup> STREET SE, SUITE 100, SALEM, OREGON 97301

TELEPHONE (503) 581-3141

FAX (503) 581 9840

February 15, 2006

Dr. Henry Johnson  
Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20202-0001

Dear Dr. Johnson:

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) is enthusiastically supportive of the Oregon Department of Education's growth model application to the U.S. Department of Education. We firmly believe that this growth model will result in a fairer and more accurate NCLB accountability system for Oregon students and schools.

Oregonians, and Oregon administrators in particular, want high standards for students and schools, and we *are* accountable – but we don't just want accountability, we want accountability that is fair and meaningful. We want valid measures for assessing the learning of our students and the progress of our schools. We believe that measuring the growth of individual students is the best way to measure learning and, collectively, school improvement.

COSA sees real value in Oregon's proposed growth model. The model, when implemented, will allow us to monitor the progress of students across time, schools and districts. It will also allow us to produce annual individual growth charts for every Oregon student and growth averages for subgroups by school and district. This is data can be of genuine use in improving student learning and school success.

COSA appreciates this common-sense approach to school and district accountability. We are committed to working closely with the Oregon Department of Education and other education partners to assure the success of the proposed growth model.

Sincerely,

Kent Hunsaker  
Executive Director